

## Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 311305 TOSEC 340034

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WASHINGTON STAR EDITORIAL  
MONDAY DECEMBER 27 HEADED "CIVIL RIGHTS IN VIETNAM."

2. IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO REGISTER SOPHISTICATED  
SCORN FOR JOAN BAEZ, THE BERRIGANS AND THE OTHER DOVE  
MILITANTS OF YESTERYEAR WHO HAVE TURNED TO PROTESTING  
"GRIEVOUS AND SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS" BY  
THE VICTORIOUS DISCIPLES OF HO CHI MINH WHO NOW CONTROL A  
UNITED VIETNAM. WHAT DID THEY EXPECT? DIDN'T THEY EVER  
HEAR OF THE MOSCOW TRIALS AND THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO?  
DON'T THEY SEE WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE RE-EDUCATION CAMPS  
OF CHINA TODAY?

3. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, MANY ANSWERS TO THESE RHETORICAL  
QUESTIONS, AND NOT ALL OF THEM ARE EITHER PERFUNCTORY  
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OR DISMISSIVE. BETWEEN THE DEBRIS OF FRENCH COLONIALISM  
AND THE BLUNDERING CRUELITIES AND CORRUPTIONS OF A SOCIETY  
TRYING TO REMAKE ITSELF IN AN ALIEN STYLE IN THE MIDST  
OF A WAR, NON-COMMUNIST VIETNAM OFFERED PLENTY OF OUTRAGES  
FOR IDEALISM TO DEPLORE. AND, WHEN THE IMPULSE TO DO  
SOMETHING ABOUT CLEARLY PERCEPTIBLE EVILS IS REINFORCED

BY UTOPIAN HOPE, IT'S EASY TO IGNORE THE IDEA THAT WINNING MIGHT NOT BE ALL GOOD.

4. IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE, CERTAINLY. THE LIST OF WESTERN INTELLECTUALS WHO, EVEN UNDER STALIN, CLUNG TO THEIR FAITH IN THE SOVIET UNION AS A JUST AND FREE SOCIETY IS ALL TOO LONG. BECAUSE IT WAS SO HARD TO ADMIT BEING WRONG, AND SO HARD TO SEE AN EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT TURN SOUR--SO HARD, ALSO, TO FIND THEMSELVES ON THE SAME SIDE WITH PEOPLE THEY WERE IN THE HABIT OF CONSIDERING THE ENEMY--THEY, FIRST, DENIED EVIDENCE AND THEN TOOK A TOUGH LINE ON HOW YOU CAN'T MAKE AN OMELET WITHOUT BREAKING EGGS.

5. THAT SORT OF THING IS GOING ON NOW IN AN OPPOSING FACTION OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, GARETH PORTER OF THE INDO-CHINA RESOURCE CENTER HAS SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE CITIZENS' ORGANIZATION FOR A SANE WORLD AND AN AD HOC GROUP INCLUDING JOAN BAEZ, DANIEL ELLSBERG AND THE BERRIGANS, BOTH OF WHICH HAVE PROTESTED TO HANOI AND THE U.N. ABOUT THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE REPORTED TO BE IN VIETNAMESE RE-EDUCATION CAMPS.

6. IT ISN'T SO, HE SAYS. AND, BESIDES, DIDN'T THE THIEU GOVERNMENT'S "REPRESSIVE APPARATUS" INCLUDE AT LEAST 395,000 PEOPLE? RE-EDUCATING THEM WOULDN'T BE AT ALL THE SAME THING AS PERSECUTING SOMEONE FOR POLITICAL OR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, WOULD IT?

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7. WHEN, A GENERATION AGO, ARTHUR KOESTLER WAS CHANGING ALLEGIANCES, HE SUMMED UP ONE ASPECT OF THE PROBLEMS IT GAVE HIM BY SAYING THAT THE TROUBLE WITH BEING ANTI-COMMUNIST WAS THAT YOU FOUND YOURSELF IN SUCH BAD COMPANY. TO HIM, AS A RELUCTANT SUPPORTER OF WESTERN DEMOCRACY, IT BECAME A MATTER OF "DEFENDING THE BAD AGAINST THE WORSE."

8. WHETHER HISTORY WILL BE REPETITIOUS ENOUGH TO MAKE JOAN BAEZ AN EX POST FACTO DEFENDER OF LYNDON JOHNSON REMAINS TO BE SEEN. MEANWHILE, IT IS REFRESHING TO FIND HER AND OTHERS LIKE HER APPLYING THE SAME STANDARD OF CIVIL RIGHTS TO HANOI AS TO SAIGON. (END TEXT.)  
ROBINSON

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